

# TEACHING GENDER EQUALITY TO KIDS: A SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONIST APPROACH TO AN INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FEAST ORGANIZED BY A BAHÁ'Í COUPLE IN ANKARA

**BY: FAZILA DERYA AGIS** 



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Derya F. Agis earned her B.A. in Italian Language and Literature from Ankara University in 1999, becoming the valedictorian of the department; she attended a Specialization Course in Translation Studies at the University of Bari in 2002, and she earned her M.A. in English Linguistics from Hacettepe University in 2007 and her M.S. in Social Anthropology from the Middle East Technical University in 2012. She taught Linguistics at the American University of Cyprus in Kyrenia (Girne American University), and worked as a visiting scholar at Brandeis University where she is a research associate today. She has various publications.

### **ABSTRACT**

This study is based on a four-hour participant observation during a 'National Sovereignty and Children's Feast' celebration organized by a Bahá'í couple in Ankara, Turkey on April 23, 2011 for their students and the children living in the same residence site as they do. Multicultural children attended the celebration where activities supporting gender equality were performed. This study intends to analyze these activities within the framework of Symbolic Interactionism of Blumer (1969).

**Key words:** Educational Anthropology, Gender Equality, Bahá'ísm, Symbolic Interactionism, 'April 23<sup>rd</sup> National Sovereignty and Children's Feast,' Children's Games

ÇOCUKLARA CİNSİYET EŞİTLİĞİNİ ÖĞRETMEK: ANKARA'DA
BAHÁ'Í BİR ÇİFT TARAFINDAN DÜZENLENEN BİR ULUSLAR ARASI
ÇOCUK BAYRAMINA SEMBOLİK ETKİLEŞİMCİLİK AÇISINDAN BİR
YAKLAŞIM

Bu çalışma 23 Nisan 2011 tarihinde Ankara, Türkiye'de bir Bahá'í çift tarafından kendileriyle aynı sitede yaşayan çocuklar ve öğrencileri için düzenlenen bir Milli Egemenlik ve Çocuk Bayramı kutlaması sırasında yapılan dört saatlik katılımcı gözleme dayanmaktadır. Cinsiyet eşitliğini destekleyen aktivitelerin yapıldığı kutlamaya çokkültürlü çocuklar katılmıştır. Bu çalışma, Blumer'in (1969) Sembolik Etkileşimcilik kuramı açısından bu aktiviteleri incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Eğitim Antropolojisi, Cinsiyet Eşitliği, Bahá'ílik, Sembolik Etkileşimcilik, '23 Nisan Milli Egemenlik ve Çocuk Bayram,' Çocuk Oyunları

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In 1844, Sayyid Ali Muhammad, a merchant from Persia, announced himself as a new messenger from God and claimed that a new prophet would soon arrive as the savior of all humanity; this prophet, Mírzá Husayn 'Alí, whose nickname was Bahá'ulláh, declared the establishment of the Bahá'í religion in Baghdad on April 21, 1863 (Bahailik [Bahá'ísm], 2011). After having been sent to prison for treason, Bahá'ulláh became an exile in Baghdad from where he was transferred to Constantinople (the current Turkish city of Istanbul) against his will, and finally he moved to Adrianople (the current Turkish city of Edirne) (Bahá'í Faith, 2011). Abbás Effendi, Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son, was recognized as 'Abdu'l-Bahá,' or the "Servant of Bahá"; he became the spiritual guide of the Bahá'ís and "the sole authoritative interpreter of Bahá'u'lláh's writings" (Bahá'í Faith, 2011), which state that the following ten principles must be obeyed:

- 1. "The oneness of humanity,"
- 2. "The equality of women and men,"
- 3. "The elimination of prejudice,"
- 4. "The elimination of extremes of wealth and poverty,"
- 5. "The independent investigation of truth,"
- 6. "Universal education,"

- 7. "Religious tolerance,"
- 8. "The harmony of science and religion,"
- 9. "A world commonwealth of nations," and
- 10. "A universal auxiliary language" (Bahá'í International Community, 2005:32).

As Bahá'ís defend the unity of all the nations and gender equality, I decided that observing a multicultural feast organized by them, where children would be performing activities against gender discrimination, constituted an excellent fieldwork opportunity.

I attended the children's feast, a joyful celebration for multicultural children living in Ankara, on April 23, 2011. A young Bahá'í couple had organized the feast, which took place in the common garden of various huge apartments in the middle-class neighborhood of Eryaman in the city of Ankara, Turkey. The site had a circular basketball court with two hoops in the middle, and stools were placed on the sidelines of the court for those who were tired to rest on. The children's relatives were also able to relax under gazebos in the nearby garden. Two loud-speakers and a CD player provided children's music in Turkish, while the children were playing.

The International Children's Feast is celebrated every year on April 23<sup>rd</sup> in Turkey to commemorate the establishment of the Grand National Assembly<sup>1</sup> (of Turkey) on April 23, 1920; Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, dedicated the feast to Turkish children, since they are the future generations that will continue to defend the "sovereignty and independence" of the Republic of Turkey (April 23 International Children's Day, 1992 and 23 Nisan Ulusal Egemenlik ve Çocuk Bayramı [April 23<sup>rd</sup> National Sovereignty and Children's Feast], 2011).

Afterwards, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared that the year 1979 would be dedicated to children and the Turkish Radio and Television Institution initiated the global celebration of the feast by inviting children from different countries to celebrate it in Turkey (23 Nisan Ulusal Egemenlik ve Çocuk Bayramı [April 23<sup>rd</sup> National Sovereignty and Children's Feast], 2011). Thus, children from around the world come to Turkey to take part in the feast every year.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "The Grand National Assembly of Turkey (Turkish: Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi), usually referred to simply as the TBMM or Parliament (Turkish: Meclis), is the unicameral Turkish legislature. It is the sole body given the legislative prerogatives by the Turkish Constitution. It was founded in Ankara on 23 April 1920 in the midst of the Turkish War of Independence. The parliament was fundamental in the efforts of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his colleagues to found a new state out of the remnants of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of the World War I" (Grand National Assembly, 2014). "The members of the dispersed Chamber of Deputies could also participate in the Assembly in Ankara. The Turkish Grand National Assembly, established on national sovereignty, held its first opening session with the participation of enthusiastic people on 23 April 1920" (The Constitutional Tradition and Parliamentary Life, n.d.).

These children organize public exhibits and performances to be displayed on the day of the feast and are hosted by Turkish families. The methodology I used to collect data for this fieldwork study is below.

### 1. 1. Methodology and Data

### 1. 1. 1. Methodology

The children's feast I attended started at 13:00 and ended at 16:00 on April 23, 2011. I left the field at 17:00. I conducted fieldwork primarily through participant observation, after securing the permission of the Bahá'í couple that had planned the event. I prefer to assign nicknames to the people from whom I gathered the data of this study. Therefore, I call the woman Daisy and the man Mike. Two days before the children's feast, I met Mike at the celebration of the Ridván feast<sup>2</sup> at the Bahá'í center in Ankara. He informed me of the children's feast that he and his wife were putting together and invited me to join.

### 1. 1. 2. Informants

Mike was a Turkish Bahá'í man, and his wife, Daisy, was Brazilian. Daisy was a Catholic Brazilian who chose to convert to the Bahá'í faith as an adult. Mike has been a Bahá'í since he was very young. They were both in their thirties or forties. Their daughter, whom I will call Rita, was a primary school student and their son, whom I will call Albert, was about 5 years old. The other children living in the apartment-complex also participated in the feast. As Mike and Daisy teach at the school of an embassy study group in Ankara, some students and another teacher at the school were also present at the feast. About twenty children between three and twelve years old attended the event, many coming from different countries and religious groups. Two were from Somalia: Huseyin and Mehmet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bahá'ís celebrate the feast of Ridván, "for a period of 12 [twelve] days starting on April 21<sup>st</sup>," as it is the day on which Bahá'u'lláh had declared his public divine duty, before departing from Baghdád in order to arrive in today's Istanbul (Lehman, 2001).

Children below the age of thirteen are not counted as Bahá'ís as they believe that religion should not be chosen until an individual has reached the appropriate level of maturity. The children attending the feast displayed tolerance towards varying religious and cultural backgrounds.

### 1. 2. Aim and Scope of This Study

There was no gender segregation in the games the children were playing. Bahá'u'lláh, the religion's founder, ordered the maintenance of "the equality of women and men" (as cited in Bahá'í International Community, 2005:32). This study aims to show how symbolic interaction was formulated for managing gender equality during children's games at a multicultural April 23<sup>rd</sup> celebration in Ankara.

### 2. THEORY: SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM AND GENDER EQUALITY

Under the guidance of George H. Mead (1863-1931), Herbert Blumer (1969) focused on symbolic interactions to render the theory of symbolic interactionism more striking (McClelland, 2000). Herbert Blumer was also influenced by John Dewey, who suggested that "human beings are best understood in relation to their environment (Society for More Creative Speech, 1996)" (as cited in Nelson, 1998). Symbolic interactionists defend that everybody may see themselves in the way others do referring to the concept of a "looking glass self," as underlined by Cooley (1961) (as cited in Firestone, 1978:98). The individual assumes the most suitable role for being accepted into society in a certain situation (see Plunkett, n.d.). In the case of the children's feast, children took part in the games and performed the same activities as their friends and the clown in order to be respected and accepted by them.

Blumer intends to analyze 1) "meaning," 2) "language," and 3) "thought" in interactions (as cited in Nelson, 1998). "Meaning states that humans act toward

people and things based upon the meanings that they have given to those people or things"; additionally, "language gives humans a means by which to negotiate meaning through symbols"; besides, "thought modifies each individual's interpretation of symbols. Thought, based-on language, is a mental conversation or dialogue that requires role- taking, or imagining different points of view" (Nelson, 1998). According to Blumer (1969:180), some humans communicate and interact with others by interpreting certain symbols.

McClelland (2000) claims that the followers of symbolic interactionism appreciate role improvisation as humans act differently in different situations. Blumerians, who prefer participant observation as a technique of data gathering, think that "role performance" is an innovative "role-making" method in terms of behavior that occurs "in the course of its execution" (Reynolds and Metzer, 1973:190). Roles are the behaviors that are expected in certain contexts (Plunkett, n.d.); in the case of this field study, children can be regarded as activists against gender discrimination, equal opportunity fighters, or peacemakers. These are the roles they assume in certain games.

A person may change roles as a student, a mother, a worker, a boss, a cook, a beauty specialist, or a teacher in front of others to communicate with them and

apply what is required in a situation (see Plunkett, n.d.); for instance, as we shall see, in the case of the children's feast, boys and girls imitated the completion of housework together to revolt against those who suggest that housework should be done only by women. In doing so, these children make biased people aware of their discriminative behavior.

Succinctly, symbolic interactionism refers to the daily situations or occasions in which people interact via diverse symbols that they regard as convenient. These symbols include "words, gestures, rules, and roles"; society poses rules, and each individual constructs her / his identity via "social interaction" (Plunkett, n.d.).

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Melvin Firestone (1978:93) mentions that mumming, *i.e.*, house-visits by "children and adults" in disguise are very common during Christmas; mummers declare who they are "before entering houses"; the householders try to decipher the identities of the mummers who are subject to quizzes, dances, etc.; when they are recognized, "the mummers" take their masks off. Firestone (1978) analyzes the house-visits by Christmas mummers in Newfoundland, Denmark, Northern Ireland, and Wales. This study provided me with an example for the application of symbolic interactionism to

the traditions of various people who are playing a game in disguise. However, my study differs from this previous study as it observes gender equality management in children's games played during a celebration held by a Bahá'í couple in Ankara.

Amy Kyratzis (2004) talks about the social interaction present in the formation of a "peer group" through "games," "conflict talk," and "peer talk." The article of Kyratzis (2004) involves sociolinguistic analyses; in my study, I will analyze the symbolic and strategic orders given to children who had met in the same space at the same time as a peer group during games in order to achieve gender equality. These orders are strategic, since they cause children to avoid bias and behave nicely to people regardless of their gender, culture, or religious background. The games played by children who are following orders given by the clown or a recorded voice on a CD have some symbolic meanings that I intend to decipher.

Christine L. Williams (2005:460) worked as a clerk in two toy stores in the United States of America: one was "located in a low-income redevelopment zone" and the other was "in an urban, upscale shopping district that catered to high-income shoppers and tourists." Williams (2005) concluded through her research that race, gender, and class inequalities defined the underlying symbolic interactions between clerks and customers.

Williams (2005) did not observe anybody trying to reduce the gender-based inequality in these stores. My study is different from this earlier study, since it analyzes an environment where gender equality was imposed upon children from different racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds and social classes.

Joanna Rae Pearson (2010) analyzed the enculturation of children into the non-Western cultures of Mazahua and Inuit, making detailed observations about human interactions in terms of power relations. Pearson's study gave me some clues as to how I could shape my own research in terms of the enculturation of children in a society where gender discrimination and gender segregation do not exist. However, I preferred to apply the theory of symbolic interactionism to my research as I was most interested in discovering the symbolic meanings of the gestures and roles that underlie the interactions between the children playing together under the guidance of a Bahá'í clown who was overseeing the gender equality management process. The clothes, the toys, and the contents of the games are crucial in interpreting the roles children take and make.

### 4. SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM AND GENDER EQUALITY

### **MANAGEMENT**

### 4. 1. Symbolic Interactionism and Gender Equality Management through

### **Clothing**

Children who attended the multicultural celebration in Ankara on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, hosted by a Bahá'í couple, were wearing comfortable clothes, such as jeans, trousers, pullovers, sweaters, and t-shirts; some female children were wearing dresses, or skirts. The styles of both boys and girls were modern. None of the girls was covered. Concerning their attire, Bahá'í women do not cover themselves, as doing so would suggest inequality between men and women. They have a historical role model for this: a famous Bahá'í woman known as Táhirih, thus, Fátimih Baraghání (1814 or 1817 – August 16–27, 1852) who "unveiled herself in Badasht" among a group of men to protest the gender inequality caused by the application of veiling laws between men and women, proclaiming, "The Trumpet is sounding! The great Trump is blown! The universal Advent is now proclaimed!" (as cited in Madansky, 1999).

### 4. 2. Symbolic Interactionism and Gender Equality Management through Toys

The clown distributed a small Turkish flag to all the children regardless of their gender, nationality, or race, since it was a national feast in Turkey dedicated to children and every nation should be respected. The flags allude to the heroism of a nation that won a war and became a democratic society, after the foundation of the Grand Turkish National Assembly on April 23, 1920.

Children had brought their bicycles, cars, scooters, balls with a leg rope (they tie the small plastic balls to their legs and whirl the balls), balls, kites, a colorful game sheet to make a small colorful ball jump on it, and hula-hoops which had vibrant colors. The clown also juggled some colorful balls and distributed balloons to the children. The clown inflated balloons with a pump and shaped these as dogs, daisies, swords, or hearts, and gave these as gifts to the children. He preferred to give the swords to boys, since they like playing with warrior toys, in general. The clown gave the other balloons - shaped as dogs, daisies, and hearts - to both girls and boys. Hearts and daisies were symbols of love and peace; the dog could be understood as a representation of natural beauty, indicating that everybody must love and take care of all the creatures. Colorful items, such as balls, balloons, and kites symbolize the joy that may exist in the whole world, if love and tolerance for people from different cultural and religious backgrounds prevail. However, girls were riding pink bicycles,

whereas boys had dark colored ones. Despite these differences in preference between girls and boys, the clown emphasized that both girls and boys could perform the same tasks and play the same games, as I analyze in the next section. The kites reminded me of a symbolic bird through which 'Abdu'l-Baha emphasizes gender equality in *The Promulgation* by positing that "The world of humanity is possessed of two wings: the male and the female" (as cited in the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, 1997). Accordingly, both boys and girls performed each activity.

# 4. 3. Symbolic Interactionism and Gender Equality Management through

### Games

Symbolically, the circular field where children were playing made me think of the unity of all the human beings in the spherical world. In fact, within the borders of this circular field, the clown managed to establish a world where boys and girls could play together, do the housework together, and help each other with every type of activity. Before beginning to play, children greeted all the people, regardless of their gender. The clown greeted all of them, by saying "hi." At first, children were free to do whatever they wanted. The clown brought balloons, balls, a colorful circle sheet, and kites. Boys and girls took the green and orange kites and flew them together, running. After this open playtime, which symbolized freedom, the clown began to play with the children. The children held a huge colorful sheet in the air to make a tiny and colorful ball jump. This was based on teamwork: both boys and girls performed the task to indicate that both gender groups can work together to complete various tasks without fighting.

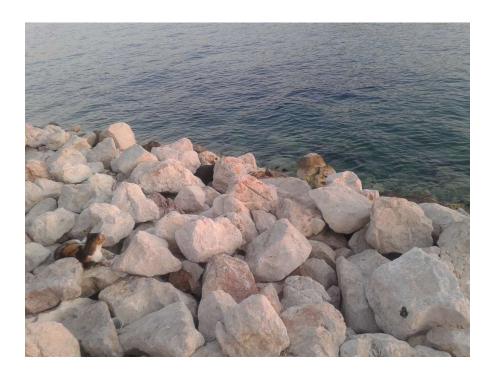
After the teamwork, children began to listen to a CD on which various commands had been recorded. The speaker ordered all the children to perform the same tasks, regardless of their gender. Twelve children participated in this activity. They danced together, while listening to the music. The first song, which they listened to, was

titled "*Iko-Iko*" and was sung by the Belle Stars. Its rhythms are very lively. Additionally, the song comes from two fighting Mardi Gras<sup>3</sup> Indian "tribes" in New Orleans (Iko Iko, 2011). The choice of such a song may imply the equality of all the races in the world as well as gender equality (see officially The Belle Stars, 1982).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "The celebration of Mardi Gras was brought to Louisiana by early French settlers. The first record of the holiday being celebrated in Louisiana was at the mouth of the Mississippi River in what is now lower Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, on March 3, 1699. Iberville, Bienville, and their men celebrated it as part of an observance of Catholic practice" (New Orleans Mardi Gras, 2011).

Listening to this song, children danced in accordance with some commands: they bent themselves and joined their hands together and moved their fingers as if they had been washing clothes and creating bubbles with the water, and they jumped in order to hang the imaginary clothes they had washed on a rope. Later, they lifted up



Picture 1 by Derya Agis (the author). Environmental education and love towards animals shall be taught.

Picture 2. Me, the researcher Derya Agis



Picture 2 by Derya Agis (the author). Nature.

their arms and gathered the imaginary clothes, and by shaking themselves, while dancing, they ironed these imaginary clothes. In Turkey, housework is typically associated with women. However, during the feast both boys and girls enjoyed doing this imaginary housework. Gender discrimination was eliminated through these physical exercises that all the children enjoyed.

Following this activity, both boys and girls imitated some animals, including lions, donkeys, and kangaroos, regardless of their own gender and the gender of the animals. Symbolically, this activity led them to love animals and not to insult boys or girls using the names of animals.

Afterwards, both girls and boys got on an imaginary plane. On the plane, they flew to different countries in order to eliminate gender segregation and discrimination and work towards realizing peace together. The imaginary plane's flight number was 001. First, they went to Russia and danced to the Russian folk song Kalinka.<sup>4</sup> Second, they went to Spain and created a Flamenco<sup>5</sup> performance. Third, they went to Greece,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> ""Kalinka" (Russian: Калинка) is a Russian song written in 1860 by the composer and folklorist Ivan Larionov and first performed in Saratov as part of a theatrical entertainment that he had composed" (Kalinka, 2011).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Flamenco is an eighteenth-century Andalusian "genre of music and dance"; it has three musts: "singing," "playing the guitar," and "dancing" (Flamenco, 2011).

where they performed Sirtaki. Fourth, they went to the U.S.A. and danced as though they were cowboys to the Rock and Roll music. At the end, they went to Saudi Arabia and belly-danced. Finally, they imagined that their plane was landing, while they jumped up and down.

The CD belonged to a performance group called "Tiyatro Hayal Perdesi" (Theater Dream Curtain) and this show was called "Hayal Dünyası Show" (Dream World Show) in Turkish. After this show, most of the children said goodbye and departed with their relatives. This exercise managed to show that all types of dances could be performed by both boys and girls as physical exercises. They learned that those from different nations are their friends, regardless of their gender, culture, and religion, through a game that included different dances. Also, although belly-dancing is generally regarded as an activity for girls/women, the boys also belly-danced. They demonstrated that dances should not be gender specific. After these guided activities were over, some children continued to fly kites, ride bicycles, and walk around. There

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "Sirtaki or syrtaki (συρτάκι) is a popular dance of Greek origin, choreographed by Giorgos Provias for the 1964 movie Zorba the Greek. It is not a traditional Greek folkdance, but a mixture of the slow and fast versions of the hasapiko dance" (Sirtaki, 2011).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> "Rock and roll (often written as rock & roll or rock 'n' roll) is a genre of popular music that originated and evolved in the United States during the late 1940s and early 1950s, primarily from a combination of the blues, country music, jazz, and gospel music" (Rock and Roll, 2011).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> "Belly dancing arose from various dancing styles which were performed in the Middle East and North Africa. Theoretically belly dance has roots in the ancient Arab tribal religions as a dance to the goddess of fertility"; it is known as "rags sharki" (Middle Eastern dance) in Arabic (Belly Dance, 2011).

was neither gender discrimination nor gender segregation in the games children were playing. Both girls and boys played soccer together; some ran and jumped together, flying kites or balloons. The activities emphasized the unity of all the human beings without gender segregation for the global progress of humanity by working together. Therefore, children assumed the roles of ordinary people doing housework, of animals, of tourists, and of dancers as potential peacemakers and fighters against gender discrimination.

At the end of the event, after the clown had gathered all the musical equipment and items, and the feast ended. Accordingly, human beings should hold each other's hands, regardless of their gender or culture to achieve the world peace and unity that will contribute to the advancement of the globe. The teacher assumed the role of a clown in order to impose the importance of gender equality in a peaceful world upon children.

Therefore, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was the spiritual guide of the Bahá'ís. 'Abdu'l-Bahá raises awareness on gender equality in *The Promulgation of Universal Peace: Talks Delivered by 'Abdu'l-Bahá during His Visit to the United States and Canada in 1912* compiled by Howard MacNutt, defending that both men and women have capabilities, talents, and "intelligence," and women have the right to education (9 June 1912, Talk at Unitarian Church Fifteenth Street and Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Notes by Edna McKinney).

In the same talk, 'Abdu'l-Bahá also proposes that wars will cease, if women receive the same education as men, since they are mothers who tend to protect their sons and daughters: "Equality between men and women is conducive to the abolition of warfare for the reason that women will never be willing to sanction it. Mothers will not give their sons as sacrifices upon the battlefield after twenty years of anxiety and loving devotion in rearing them from infancy, no matter what cause they are called upon to defend." Moreover, Bahá'í women are educated to follow the exemplar behavior of their role model Táhirih, who unveiled herself unexpectedly in front of men for the emancipation of women in Iran; for this reason, she was killed in 1852 (Forsloff, 2011).

To conclude, Bahá'í women are educated equally to men, and thus are taught and encouraged to wear the same clothes as men and take part in jobs that require scientific knowledge, since men and women are two parts of the humanity that complete one another in sciences and life for scientific progresses.

I stayed in the field until 17:00 to observe what people would do after the celebration. Everybody left happily, and the Bahá'í couple returned home, since their students and children needed to study. As they studied, they did not fight, but assisted each other.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

All the children performed the same activities, used Turkish or English to communicate with each other, were not concerned about their gender or class, accepted their friends without any prejudice, and showed that the world was the country of all of the human beings without any borders. Their activities were examples of a universal education system. Each child was happy to participate in the feast organized by the Bahá'ís, regardless of their religion, since peace and gender equality were emphasized. Additionally, the children learned to respect the flags of another country, to honor the soldiers who fought against enemies that were trying to disturb the world peace, as they carried and waved Turkish flags, even though they were not Turkish.

Furthermore, although some children might not have experienced gender equality in their own families, they had the opportunity to learn it during the games, and one hopes that, going forward, they will not discriminate against people from different backgrounds and will create a peaceful environment in the future. As gifts, the balloons and flags meant 'equal pay for equal work' for the boys and girls who were willing to perform the same activities together. The orders given to these children made them encode the information about what to do without discriminating others in relation with their gender and culture, since both girls and boys had to perform the same activities. This linguistic information that consisted of orders addressed to children who were taking part in a game gained meaning through symbolic gestures and rules during activities, which could be conceived as the best ways leading to peace between the opposite sexes and different cultural groups via the interpretation of their messages as a result of thought processes through which experiences and information were reformulated. The children took the roles of pacifists and defenders of women's rights, after having made roles during activities and games, judging what was just. Women and men are equal and able to perform the same tasks, as witnessed in the children's games depicted in this study.

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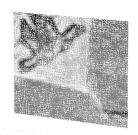
## **APPENDICES: FIELD PHOTOS**



(1) forming a friendship circle with a clown



(2) different toys



(3) a kite